

U.S. Serial No. 09/882,849

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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for imparting a grouted edge appearance to a flooring module having a textile face and a plurality of edges, the method comprising:

moving the module and a shear relative to each other to remove a portion of the textile face along each edge of the module wherein the module is moved in a first direction relative to a first shear and in a direction orthogonal to the first direction, or in the same direction after rotating the module, without bending the module in a mechanically driven continuous process.

2. (Currently Amended) A method for imparting a grouted edge appearance to a flooring module having an underside and an upper surface comprising a textile face comprising:

providing at least one mechanical conveyor that supports the underside of the flooring module;

conveying the module in a first direction past a first treating head to remove a portion of the textile face along an edge of the module;

conveying the module in a direction orthogonal to the first direction, or in the same direction after rotating the module, past a second treating head without bending the module in a mechanically driven continuous process.

3. Cancelled.

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4. Cancelled.

5. Cancelled.

6. Cancelled.

7. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for creating a grouted edge appearance on an edge of a flooring module having a textile fiber face, comprising:

a shear; and

a machine-driven conveyor for moving one of the module or the shear relative to the other of the shear or the module, wherein the conveyor moves the module or the shear in a first direction relative to the other of the shear or the module and in a direction orthogonal to the first direction, or in the same direction after rotating the module or the shear, without bending the module.

8. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 7, further comprising moving the module relative to the shear.

9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the shear is a tile edger.

10. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 7, further comprising moving the shear relative to the module.

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11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for creating a flooring module of textile fiber face having edges different in appearance from the remainder of the face comprising:

at least two shears for treating a set of opposed edges of the module; and
a machine-driven conveyor for moving the module past the shears wherein the conveyor moves the module in a first direction relative to a first shear and in a direction orthogonal to the first direction, or in the same direction after rotating the module, relative to a second shear without bending the module.

12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the conveyor moves each of the module edges past at least one of the shears.

13. Cancelled.

14. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for creating a grouted edge appearance on a rectangular flooring module having a textile fiber face and at least a first and second pair of opposed edges, comprising:

a first, linearly moving conveyor for advancing the module in a first direction past a first pair of treating heads adapted to treat the textile fiber face along a first pair of opposed edges of the module without bending the module; and

a second, linearly moving conveyor for advancing the module in a direction orthogonal to the first direction, or in the same direction after rotating the module past a second pair of treating

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heads adapted to treat the textile fiber face along a second pair of opposed edges of the module without bending the module.

15. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the first and second pairs of treating heads each comprises a heat source.

16. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the heat source comprises a hot air gun.

17. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the heat source comprises a glue gun.

18. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein each of the first and second conveyors advance the module at two different speeds.

19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the first conveyor advances the module in a direction orthogonal to the direction of the second conveyor.

20. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the position of at least one treating head relative to a module edge is adjustable.

21. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the position of the hot air gun relative to a module edge is adjustable.

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22. (Currently Amended) A method for imparting a grouted edge appearance to a flooring module having a textile fiber face comprising:

moving the module and a treating head relative to each other;

melting the textile face along each edge of the flooring module using the treating head wherein the module is moved in a first direction relative to the treating head and in a direction orthogonal to the first direction, or in the same direction after rotating the module, without bending the module in a mechanically driven continuous process.

23. (Currently Amended) A method for imparting a grouted edge appearance to a flooring module having an upper surface comprising a textile face comprising melting portions of the textile face along each edge of the module wherein at least some of the edges are melted by conveying the module in a first direction past at least one treating head to melt portions of the textile face along an edge of the module and conveying the module in a direction orthogonal to the first direction, or in the same direction after rotating the module, past at least one other treating head to melt portions of the textile face along another edge of the module, without bending the module in a mechanically driven continuous process.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein each treating head comprises a heat gun.

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25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, further comprising compressing and consolidating at least a portion of the upper surface textile face of the module without penetrating a back surface of the module.
26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, further comprising embossing at least a portion of the upper surface textile face of the module.
27. (Currently Amended) A method for imparting a grouted edge appearance to a flooring module having an upper surface comprising a textile face comprising applying a hot melt adhesive along each edge of the module wherein the hot melt adhesive is applied by conveying the module in a first direction past at least one treating head to apply a hot melt adhesive to portions of the textile face along an edge of the module and conveying the module in a direction orthogonal to the first direction, or in the same direction after rotating the module, without bending the module past at least one other treating head to apply a hot melt adhesive to portions of the textile face along another edge of the module in a mechanically driven continuous process.
28. Cancelled.
29. Cancelled.
30. Cancelled.

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31. Cancelled.

32. Cancelled.

33. Cancelled.

34. Cancelled.

35. Cancelled.

36. Cancelled.

37. Cancelled.

38. Cancelled.

39. Cancelled.

40. Cancelled.

41. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for creating a grouted edge appearance on an edge of a flooring module having a textile fiber face, comprising:

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a treating unit selected from the group consisting of a heat gun, a die coater, an embosser, and a laser; and

a mechanically driven conveyor for moving one of the module or the treating unit relative to the other of the treating unit or the module wherein the module or the treating unit is moved in a first direction relative to the other of the module or the treating unit and in a direction orthogonal to the first direction, or in the same direction after rotating the module or the treating unit, without bending the module.

42. Cancelled.

43. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for creating a flooring module of textile fiber face having every edge of the module different in appearance from the remainder of the face, comprising a rotating treating unit that moves to treat each edge of the flooring module without bending the module in a mechanically driven continuous process.

44. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for creating a flooring module of textile fiber face having every edges of the module different in appearance from the remainder of the face, comprising multiple energy sources that simultaneously treat each edge of the module without bending the module in a mechanically driven continuous process.

45. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for creating a flooring module of textile fiber face having every edge of the module different in appearance from the remainder of the face comprising:

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a module having first and second set of opposed edges;
two energy sources for treating the first set of opposed edges of the module;
a device for rotating the module 90° without bending the module such that the energy sources can treat the second set of opposed edges of the module.

46. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for creating a flooring module of textile fiber face having every edge of the module different in appearance from the remainder of the face comprising:

multiple energy sources for simultaneously treating each edge of the module without bending the module in a mechanically driven continuous process.

47. Cancelled.

48. Cancelled.

49. Cancelled.

50. Cancelled.

51. Cancelled.

52. Cancelled.

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53. Cancelled.

54. (Previously Presented) The method for imparting a grouted edge appearance to a flooring module having a textile face of claim 1, wherein removal of a peripheral portion of the textile face leaves a bevel at the edge of the textile face.

55. (Previously Presented) The method for imparting a grouted edge appearance to a flooring module of claim 2, wherein each treating unit is positioned at an acute angle relative to a face of the flooring module face to produce a beveled edge on the face.

56. Cancelled.